



TO: Diabetes Care and Education Dietetic Practice Group (DCE DPG) members

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TOPIC: Reproduction of the education handout *Your Blood Glucose Numbers*

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Your blood glucose numbers

Why should I check my blood glucose?

Your blood glucose numbers give you important information about how well your diet, medications and activity are working.

Blood glucose levels change all the time. You need to check your blood glucose to make sure it's in your target range.

How you feel isn't always a correct sense of what your blood glucose is.

How often should I check my blood glucose?

If you take insulin, the American Diabetes Association recommends checking your blood glucose three to four times each day.

If you don't take insulin to control your diabetes, there is no set number of times each day to check your blood glucose. However, if there is a change in your treatment, activity or health, check your blood glucose more often to see how the changes affect your usual blood glucose patterns.

When should I check my blood glucose?

By checking your blood glucose at different times, you can learn how it changes throughout the day and how it is affected by food and activity.

Write down your daily blood glucose numbers. Look for times when the blood glucose is NOT in your target range.

When you check depends on what you want to learn

- Any time you feel it might be low, before and after activity, and when you are sick. If you don't have symptoms when your blood glucose is low, (known as hypoglycemia unawareness), always check before driving, and more often when exercising or sick.
- To see how a meal affects your blood glucose, check before and one to two hours after the meal.
- To see how certain medications affect your blood glucose, check when the medication is most active. For example, check your morning fasting blood glucose to see how long-acting medications taken the night before are working.
- If you have type 2 diabetes and are not taking medication, a morning fasting blood glucose in the target range shows you that your body is making enough insulin overnight.
- To see how activity and exercise affect your blood glucose, check before and after activity and note the change.

If the blood glucose is often high or low at certain times of the day, you may need to make changes in your diet, medication or activity. Talk with your health care provider before you make any medication changes.

Targets for blood glucose	ADA*	AACE**
Fasting or before a meal	90-130 mg/dl	<110 mg/dl
Two hours after the start of a meal	<180 mg/dl	<140 mg/dl

*American Diabetes Association (ADA)

**American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE)

Your blood glucose goals may be different. Ask your health care provider for help setting your goals.

Why do I sometimes get unusual readings?

Use your meter's control solution to check the test strip any time you question the reading or get a reading that doesn't match how you feel.

The most common cause of wrong blood glucose readings is not using the meter correctly. Check your meter instruction guide if you think your blood glucose readings may not be right.

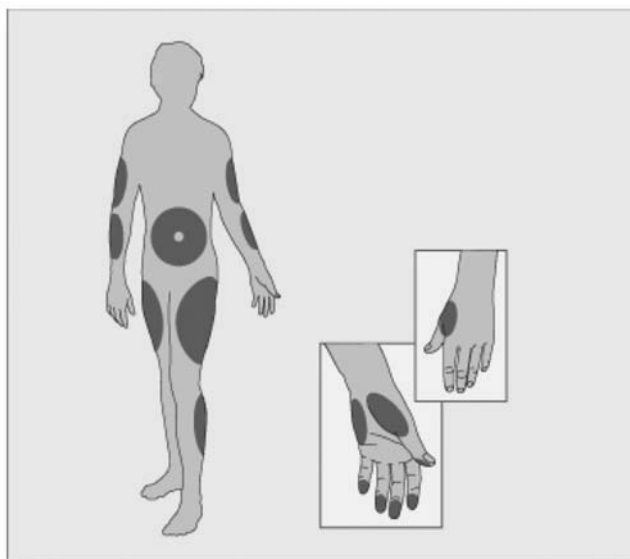
Do I always have to prick my fingers to check my blood glucose?

The most common site used to check your blood glucose is the fingertips. It is possible to get blood samples from sites other than the fingers. To avoid the pain of finger pricks, some meters allow for alternate site testing. Check your meter to see if it is approved for alternate site testing. Read your meter's instruction guide to learn how to use these other sites.

Alternate site testing should NOT be used to check for low blood glucose. *Always use your fingers when checking for low blood glucose. Since blood flows to your fingers three to five times faster than other parts of your body, low blood glucose will be noticed at your fingers first.*

Your blood glucose record is an important part of your health care. Take your records to each visit with your health care team. Checking your blood glucose regularly is an important part of caring for your health.

If you have questions about checking blood glucose, contact your health care provider or a certified diabetes educator.



Artwork courtesy of Abbott Laboratories.

Alternate site testing areas are the upper arm, thigh, calf, fleshy parts of the hand, and abdomen.

Note: Always use your fingers when checking for low blood glucose.



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For more information: Contact the American Dietetic Association at www.eatright.org or 1-800-366-1655.

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Sponsored by: Abbott Laboratories, the makers of FreeStyle and Precision Blood Glucose Meters. For more information, visit www.AbbottDiabetesCare.com.